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4-H

FOR YOUTH

FOR AMERICA

United States
Department of
Agriculture



Extension
Service

Program
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4-H for YOUTH

4-H is the youth component of Extension's nationwide educational network. For millions of youth across America, 4-H membership and involvement means individual achievement, a challenging future, and a lifetime of service to community and country.

4-H is conducted by the Cooperative Extension System through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, state land-grant universities, and local governments. 4-H is unique because of its direct link to the strong research and technology base of this proven educational system, while serving as the off-campus educational outreach to the youth population. Extension Service, USDA gives national leadership and direction to the 4-H program.

4-H's NATIONAL THEME

"4-H for Youth for America" depicts the broad outreach of 4-H to all youth and the positive impact of the 4-H program on American society. About 45 million Americans have participated in 4-H since the program started shortly after the turn of this century.

Many of our Nation's leaders — in business, agriculture, education, politics, research, and science — are proud 4-H alumni. Through their 4-H experiences, they honed and developed leadership, problem-solving, and management skills.



4-H for ALL YOUTH

4-H programs are conducted in 3,150 counties of the United States as well as the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and Micronesia.

4-H programs are open to all interested youth regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or handicap. 4-H members, primarily between the ages of 9 and 19, live on the farm, in the city, and in between. Some local areas offer programs for younger youth, while collegiate 4-H campus groups continue to grow across the country.

Interested youth can contact the county Extension office for detailed information about the 4-H programs offered in their local areas. Or state 4-H offices, located in the Cooperative Extension Service on the campus of each state land-grant university, can advise interested persons about member activities.



4-H for LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Developing life skills is a primary focus of the 4-H program. Through participation in 4-H, young people develop new skills and explore possible career choices. The 4-H goals, redefined in 1982, reaffirm the overall mission of 4-H. These goals assist youth and their adult volunteer leaders to invest in the objectives of the 4-H program:

To help youth develop:

- Personal standards and values, positive self concepts, and effective interpersonal and communication skills.
- Inquiring minds; an eagerness to learn; and the ability to apply science, technology, and economic (business) principles.
- Ability to make decisions, solve problems, and accept responsibilities.
- Leadership capabilities.
- Concern for and involvement in community, national, and international affairs.
- Career and lifelong planning and learning.



To help 4-H volunteers:

- Develop skills, abilities, and understandings essential to working with 4-H participants and others.
- Enhance their leadership capabilities and personal development.
- Extend the land-grant university knowledge base through the Cooperative Extension System to the people.

To assist professionals who work in youth serving programs:

- Gain access to the knowledge resources of the land-grant university system.
- Pursue youth work as a career.



4-H for AMERICA

4-H today is the Nation's largest, dynamic, informal educational program for youth. The public-private partnership supporting 4-H is a sound investment in our Nation's future and one of the most cost effective. This synergistic program meshes the human and financial resources of federal, state, and local governments with those of business, industry, and other organizations in the private sector.

Public funding for 4-H, channeled through the Cooperative Extension System, is provided by the U.S. Congress, state legislatures, and local governments. The private sector donates approximately \$41 million annually to support 4-H at the national, state, and local levels. At the national level, private support comes through National 4-H Council from nearly 2,000 corporations, foundations, organizations, and individuals to provide motivation incentives, and training for youth and volunteers.

4-H for VOLUNTEERS

Over half a million well-trained volunteers help make 4-H one of the most cost-effective publicly supported programs of the 1980's. The average adult volunteer donates 220 hours a year to 4-H, drives 300 to 400 miles in a personally owned car, and spends \$50 to \$60 out of pocket for teaching materials. The estimated value of the total time volunteers devote to 4-H, plus the out of pocket expenses, is about \$1.1 billion annually.



The contribution of such devoted volunteers is tremendous; however, 4-H does reciprocate. Volunteers receive the latest information on results from land-grant university research, develop their own leadership skills, and experience personal growth and self-fulfillment.

4-H is truly a people development program, committed to volunteerism and locally determined programs. Volunteers not only extend the educational experiences of 4-H to youthful members in a personal, caring way, but also keep the local program relevant to the community, the youth, and their families.

4-H for YOUTH for AMERICA

4-H is an important first step to adulthood and citizenship. Extension's focus on people, programs, and purpose contributes immeasurably to the strength of our country. As the youth component of this proven, educational system, 4-H provides the "hands on" practical application of Extension research-based knowledge and technology. By selecting from over 100 project areas, 4-H'ers not only learn practical skills, but also develop sound judgment, a sense of responsibility, and individual motive for future career choices or later educational pursuits.

The 4-H idea goes far beyond our Nation's border. Youth programs similar to 4-H exist in more than 80 countries on every continent. 4-H offers young people an opportunity to participate in international exchanges where they can live and work with families in other lands. This international aspect of 4-H strengthens America's understanding of our global community.

Through this century's years of mechanization to electrification to computerization, 4-H in its practical projects continues to bring new technologies to American youth where they live and work. Coupled with a program goal to support the conservation and wise use of America's natural and renewable resources, the 4-H program is designed to make this country of ours a better place. 4-H IS FOR YOUTH, AND FOR AMERICA!

The Extension Service, United States Department of Agriculture, offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, or handicap, and is an equal opportunity employer.

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